



**Nathan Deal**  
Governor

**Bobby Cagle, MSW**  
Commissioner

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## **Quality Rated: New Child Care Ratings Go Public July 1**

***Program Designed to Help Parents in Selecting Quality Early Education Programs  
Over 1,200 programs have voluntarily enrolled in Georgia's "Quality Rated"***

**ATLANTA, Ga., (July 1, 2013)** – The daunting task of finding the right child care program in Georgia gets a little easier beginning today. Bobby Cagle, commissioner of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, announced the official launch to parents of Quality Rated, Georgia's new voluntary system to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education programs.

"From birth to five years old, a child's brain can make 700 new connections per second and a high quality early education program can partner with parents to build a foundation for success in these critical early years," said Commissioner Cagle. "Quality Rated is our new community-powered early education rating system that identifies which early childhood education programs have a commitment to quality. Right Place...Bright Future. That's Quality Rated." Commissioner Cagle said the program has been a top priority for Governor Nathan Deal.

Recognizing quality early education programs can be bewildering to parents. Quality Rated can help. Similar to rating systems for other service industries like restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated uses one, two and three stars to indicate early care and education programs that meet a set of standards exceeding the state's minimum licensing requirements.

Beginning today, those ratings will be posted for public inspection at [www.qualityrated.org](http://www.qualityrated.org) and the DECAL web site [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov). DECAL said nearly 1,300 child care programs are participating in Quality Rated, with approximately 200 programs now rated.

Programs choosing to participate in Quality Rated become eligible for free professional development, technical assistance, and financial incentive packages supported by foundations and businesses. Star-rated programs receive tiered bonuses in the state/federal reimbursements they receive from Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program, which provides subsidized child care for low income families. One-star programs receive a two-percent bonus; two-star programs receive a five-percent bonus; and three-star programs receive a ten-percent bonus.

With support from the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) and other public-private partners, Quality Rated will use billboards, print, radio, TV and online advertising to promote the voluntary program throughout the state. Commissioner Cagle said, "We want parents to be aware of Quality Rated and use this information in selecting quality early education for their children. If they already have a child care program, we hope they ask them if they are Quality Rated --- and if not, why not?"

For answers to questions about Quality Rated, call the Quality Rated Help Desk at 1-855-800-7747 or connect with child care resources at [www.allgakids.org](http://www.allgakids.org) or by calling the toll-free number 1-877-ALL GA KIDS.

### **About Bright from the Start**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).